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R 220202Z DEC 09
FM AMEMBASSY DILI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 4643
INFO RUCNASE/ASEAN MEMBER COLLECTIVE
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 1363
RUEHLI/AMEMBASSY LISBON 1182
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHINGTON DC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 0975
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 1151
RUEHDT/AMEMBASSY DILI 4199

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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER VOICES SUPPORT ON AFGHANISTAN

¶1. Timor-Leste Prime Minister Xanana Gusmao sent a letter dated December 14, 2009, to the Ambassador expressing his government's support for President Obama's strategy on the way forward in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Full text follows below. Electronic version forwarded to EAP/MTS.

¶2. (Begin text)

Dear Ambassador,

I refer to your letter dated 2 December 2009 and thank you for providing information on the President of the United States of America's decision on the way forward in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

The Government of Timor-Leste supports the engagement of the United States of America, and the broad coalition of a further 43 nations, in fighting al Qaeda and restoring peace and security in Afghanistan. Timor-Leste understands well the terrible costs of war. After the abhorrent attacks on the United States of America on September 11, 2001, however, it was clear that the resort to force was necessary in Afghanistan.

The Government of Timor-Leste gives its full support to President Obama's strategy on the way forward in Afghanistan and Pakistan. We hope, and we trust, that this strategy, including the commitment of additional military personnel, will hasten the achievement of peace in that region. And we encourage the United States of America, consistent with this strategy, to ensure that the full responsibility for security and governance is transferred to the people of Afghanistan at the earliest opportunity.

Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Kay Rala Xanana Gusmao

Prime Minister

(end text).

KLEMM